

# STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

## Agenda

Session 5 – 09.30 Thursday 11 October 2018

Matter 5

### Specific Housing Needs and Generic Housing Policies

This matter considers housing mix, affordable housing, gypsy and traveller needs and generic housing policies (Section 8.3 of the LP).

In response to preliminary questions:

- The Council indicates that it will seek to apply the optional technical standards in relation to space and accessibility but the extent that they will be applied will depend on a number of factors such as the type of housing and viability. Policy H1 and its explanation are proposed to be modified to provide clarification (MM21-22);
- Inconsistencies within policies relating to starter homes are to be addressed (MM1, MM12);
- A revised threshold of 11 dwellings for the provision of affordable housing is proposed (MM23)
- Policy H3 Section is to be modified to allow a proportion of market housing (para 54 of the NPPF refers) (MM23);
- Policy H3 is to be modified to ensure that affordable housing is designed so that it is tenure blind (MM23); and,
- Policy H4 is to be modified to make clear the residual requirement for traveller pitches (MM24-25).

## Issues

### 1. Housing Mix (Policy H1)

*1.1. Does the requirement for developments to provide for a mix of housing in accordance with the most up-to-date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) provide sufficient clarity?*

The most recent SHMA suggests that the housing mix should be 60% 1 and 2 beds and 40% 3 and 4 beds. The Council indicates that the policy will be applied flexibly as recommended by the Local Plan and Site Allocations Viability Study, particularly during the early period of the LP.

*Supplementary Question – Is Policy H1 through use of the SHMA likely to reflect ‘local demand’ particularly in respect of villages or should there also be reference to local housing needs surveys?*

*1.2 Are the requirements of Policy H1 in relation to space and accessibility clear?*

The Council indicates that it ‘seeks to apply the optional standards but with detailed consideration at the planning application stage’. MM21 is also relevant.

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*1.3 Does the wording of Policy H1 allow for sufficient flexibility taking into account viability considerations and differing needs across the District?*

The Council point out that the policy is not prescriptive and that 'the final mix will be negotiated with the developer.'

## **2. Affordable Housing (Policy H3)**

*2.1 Are the requirements for the levels of affordable housing within Policy H3 justified (now proposed as 33% on schemes of 11 dwellings and above)?*

The Council accepts that it may not be possible to achieve 33% provision on all sites but note that Policy H3 indicates that the level will be determined by negotiation.

*2.2 In particular is the threshold of '5 dwellings or more' for elsewhere (areas beyond the towns) justified?*

The Council now accepts that the 5 dwelling or more threshold should be increased to 11 dwellings or more and propose MM23 in this respect.

*2.3 Should a finer grain approach to the amount of provision in different parts of the District be adopted taking into account the findings of the viability study?~*

The Council considers that such detail would be difficult to include in the policy.

*2.4 Is the wording of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of Policy H3 Section 1) a) likely to undermine the provision of affordable housing?*

The Council considers that the point has been dealt with by MM23. It is now proposed that the policy refers to 'exceptionally'.

*2.5 Is the tenure split within Policy H3 justified? (60% for rent/40% intermediate or starter homes)*

The Council refers to the SHMA update 2017 (Sections 6.0 and 7.0).

*2.6 Does the tenure split provide sufficient flexibility if needs change over the lifetime of the LP?*

The Council points out that Policy H3 allows some flexibility as it states 'unless circumstances dictate otherwise.'

*2.7 Is the modification to Policy H3 Section 2) a) to allow a proportion of market housing (para 54 of the NPPF refers) appropriate?*

The Council has responded to the Inspector's preliminary views with MM23.

## **3. Generic Housing Policies**

*3.1 Are the other requirements of Policy H1 clear to the decision maker e.g. in relation to starter homes and self-build housing?*

The Council refers to MM1 and MM12 in relation to starter homes. Self-build housing

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will be looked at on a site-by-site basis.

*3.2 Is the criterion within Policy H1 relating to the conversion of rural buildings (Section 5) d)) consistent with national policy?*

The Council consider that the policy is broadly consistent with national policy but goes further to prevent the conversion of functional buildings to housing.

*3.3 Is the criterion within Policy H1 relating to the subdivision of existing dwellings (Section 5) f)) consistent with national policy?*

The Council considers that the policy reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

#### **4. Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (Policy H4)**

*4.1 Does the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) robustly assess the need for residential and transit sites in the District?*

The Council points to the experience of its GTAA consultant. Residual requirements are likely to be a maximum taking into account the revised definition of traveller in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (PPTS).

*4.2 Does Policy H4 as modified make clear any residual requirement for traveller pitches/plots and how these will be provided?*

The Council considers that MM24-25 deals with these points.

*4.3 Does the use of a criteria based policy to meet the residual need for traveller sites reflect a positively prepared LP?*

The Council notes that it has sought to identify a suitable site since 2011 without success.

*4.4 Are the criteria within Policy H4 consistent with PPTS?*

The Council has supported the criteria by cross referencing with paragraphs of the PPTS.

#### **Main Evidence Base**

SD.13.5 - Policy & Strategy Topic Paper

SD.18 – Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessments

SD.24 – Local Plan and Site Allocations Viability Study

EL1.001b - Council response to Inspector's Preliminary questions

EL1.001d Council response to Inspector's follow up questions

EL3.001a Schedule of Main Modifications

#### **Participants**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC)

EL2.050

Cheadle Unite LPS429

EL2.030

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Ken Wainman Associates Ltd LPS65	EL2.016
Emery Planning for Ms Tina Hart & David Griffiths LPS272	EL2.072
WW Planning LPS331	EL2.021

## **Statements**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC)

Cheadle Unite LPS429

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